

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the above amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1-15, 17, and 21-28 will be pending of which claims 1 and 26 are independent. Claims 1, 6-7, and 17 have been revised to employ a more conventional U.S. claim format, claims 16 and 19-20 have been cancelled, and claims 26-28 have been added. Support for new claims 26-28 can be found throughout the application as filed. *See, e.g.*, page 1, line 31 through page 2, line 1, and page 7, lines 18-20 (claim 26); page 12, lines 2-4 (claim 27); and page 19, lines 18-19 (claim 28). No new matter has been introduced.

Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, as being obvious over U.S. Patent 5,516,860 to Reich. Furthermore, claims 19-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, as being obvious over U.S. Patent 4,420,416 to Larsen. In this regard, Applicants note that claims 16 and 19-20 have been cancelled and that, thus, these rejections are moot.

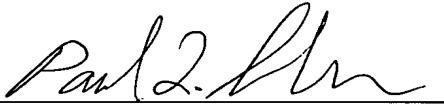
Claims 1-18 and 21-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Reich in view of Larsen. However, Reich and Larsen, either alone or in combination, are absent any teaching or suggestion of improving hydrolytic stability through the present neutralization step. The Examples in the present application, on the other hand, clearly demonstrate this benefit. *See, e.g.*, Table 1 on page 27 of the specification: the samples neutralised with an oxetane (Ex. 8) or ortho ester (Ex. 9) show markedly lower strong acid (AV1) contents over time when compared to the unneutralised sample (Comp. Exp. 1) and the glycidyl methacrylate neutralised sample (Comp. Exp. 2). Accordingly, for at least the above reasons, withdrawal of the rejections over the combination of Reich and Larsen is respectfully requested.

Therefore, all rejections having been addressed and overcome, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney for Applicants at the telephone number indicated below in order to expeditiously resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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